

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. This action is in reply to Applicant's request for continued examination filed on 02/19/2008.
2. Claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-12 have been amended.
3. Claim 13 has been newly added.
4. Claims 1-13 are currently pending and have been examined.

Response to Arguments

5. With regard to the Applicant's arguments, the new grounds of rejection necessitated by the Applicant's amendments to the claimed invention renders them moot.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

6. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

7. Claims 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The claims, as recited are directed toward a system for performing the method of the Applicant's invention. However, such claims do not recite the tangible components of the system and are therefore interpreted to encompass computer code, per se. Under the current guidelines of 35 U.S.C. 101, computer code, per se, is not eligible for patent protection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Shoolery et al.*, US Patent No. 5,570,283, in view of, *Khanna et al.*, US Patent Publication No. 2002/0133605 A1.

As per claim 1

Shoolery teaches:

- Receiving, at a transaction processor host, a request from a user for the travel expense report account data, wherein the request includes data selection criteria comprising a corporate transaction account provider identifier, an air sector, and a fare basis code (see at least column 5, lines 13-64)
- Determining when the request includes a natural language query (see at least column 7, lines 1-36)
- Parsing the request to retrieve the data selection criteria from the natural language query when the request includes the natural language query (see at least column 7, lines 1-36)
- Receiving a categorized view instruction from the user, wherein the categorized view instruction determines a data placement and format for the processed travel expense report (see at least column 7, lines 21-36)
- Wherein the plurality of disparate sources store travel transaction data and financial transaction account data (see at least column 8, lines 5-50)

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- Retrieving the financial transaction account data from at least one of the plurality of disparate sources in accordance with the data selection criteria (see at least column 7, lines 37-67; column 8, lines 1-4)
- Retrieving the travel transaction data from at least one of a: Customer Reservations System (CRS) and an air carrier, wherein the travel transaction data includes the air sectors, and the fare basis codes provided by the air carrier and, wherein the travel transaction data is obtained by the host transaction processor on behalf of the user (see at least column 7, lines 37-67; column 8, lines 1-4; column 5, lines 13-42)
- Adding proprietary information to the financial transaction account data and the travel transaction data, wherein the proprietary information relates to a host supplier network (see at least column 4, lines 46-65)
- Adding to the travel expense report, line item detail from the financial transaction account data and from the travel transaction data (see at least column 8, lines 32-49)
- Analyzing metadata associated with data elements of the financial transaction account data and data elements of the travel transaction data to determine relationships between the data elements (see at least column 4, lines 46-65)
- Positioning each of the data elements according to the relationships and in accordance with the categorized view instruction, wherein the data elements are marked as billed or unbilled (see at least column 8, lines 32-49)
- Conditioning the data elements to create the processed travel expense report for transmission to the user, the transaction and sending the processed financial data travel expense report to the user, wherein the user analyses the data travel expense report to determine a level of spend for a defined item over a defined time (see at least column 4, paragraphs 8-25)

Shoolery does not teach:

- Formatting the data selection criteria in accordance with format requirements

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Khanna teaches:

- Formatting the data selection criteria in accordance with format requirements (see at least page 7, paragraphs 70-73)

However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the invention, to add to the teachings of Shoolery, the teachings of Khanna. Furthermore, one would have been motivated to do so in order to provide better management of travel expenses in a corporate environment (see at least Shoolery column 8, lines 27-31).

As per claim 2

Shoolery, in view of Khanna, teaches the method of claim 1, as described above.

Shoolery further teaches:

- The conditioning step includes converting the data elements from the disparate sources into a single format (see at least column 4, lines 46-65)

As per claim 3

Shoolery, in view of Khanna, teaches the method of claim 2, as described above.

Shoolery further teaches:

- Formatting the processed financial transaction account data into a report (see at least column 4, lines 46-65; column 8, lines 32-49)

As per claim 4

Shoolery, in view of Khanna, teaches the method of claim 3, as described above.

Shoolery further teaches:

- Receiving from the user a query associated with the request (see at least column 4, lines 46-65)
- Processing the financial transaction account data and the travel transaction data to extract account data satisfying parameters of the query (see at least column 5, lines 45-65)

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- Sending the extracted account data to the user (see at least column 5, lines 45-65)

As per claim 5

Shoolery, in view of Khanna, teaches the method of claim 4, as described above.

Shoolery further teaches:

- Formatting the extracted account data into a report (see at least column 5, lines 45-65)

As per claim 13

Shoolery, in view of Khanna, teaches the method of claim 1, as described above.

Neither Shoolery nor Khanna teaches:

- Wherein the disparate sources include regional providers of the corporate transaction account that operate as at least one of: a wholly owned organization, a franchise, and a partnership

However, the Examiner takes OFFICIAL NOTICE that these types of businesses are old and well known in the art and are merely non-functional descriptions of the preferred embodiment of the Applicant's invention. Furthermore, it would have been obvious to include such well known facts as they were readily available and would have given a predictable result when added to the combination of Shoolery and Khanna.

ADDITIONAL REJECTIONS

As per claims 6-12

With regard to claims 6-12, the Examiner has interpreted them to encompass substantially the same scope of subject matter as recited in claims 1-5 and 13. Accordingly, claims 6-12 are rejected in substantially the same manner as claims 1-5 and 13.

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Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas M. Hammond III whose telephone number is 571-270-1829. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday, 7AM - 5PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Alexander Kalinowski can be reached on 571-272-6771. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3691

US Patent & Trademark Office

04/10/2008

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